

The GEORGE VAN EPS METHOD



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Through this method I hope to open the door to a new type of harmonic technique and knowledge for the guitar. There has been a shortage of good constructional harmonic material that develops the hand mechanically and increases the knowledge musically. All exercises presented in this volume have been carefully tested through years of teaching. Each one has a definite purpose for development of the hand, no matter how insignificant it may seem to the student.

The exercises are given in condensed form to save space and also to encourage and develop independent thinking on the part of the student. They are written in one key but are to be played in all the keys, as shown in the explanations accompanying the exercises. Think of the tonic of every key as "do"; this is called the Solfeggio system. Therefore if you are in E flat, consider the E flat as "do". Through this system all keys are equal and therefore you will not favor any particular key or keys. Some of the exercises in this method are written in whole notes with no dividing bar line but should be practiced at a slow even tempo. Succeeding volumes are in preparation for publication in the near future.

GEORGE VAN EPS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

HOLDING THE GUITAR

Holding the guitar correctly is a point that should be studied very carefully because there are many important factors to be considered, the first of which is comfort. It is almost impossible to work freely if



you are trying to support or hang on to the guitar with your hands. The normal technicalities of the instrument are difficult and tiring enough without an awkward posture to make them more so. Here is the correct posture. Sit in a straight-back chair of medium height and then cross the left leg over the right so that your left knee rests on your right knee at the same time keeping your right foot flat on the floor. Then place the body of the guitar on your lap so that the lower hollow fits the left leg and the upper hollow rests against the right side of your chest. In this position the left leg may go to sleep, at first but this won't bother you for long. The body of the guitar should be on an angle

of approximately twenty degrees in relation to your torso and the scroll should be on a level with your shoulder, but slightly forward. Never lean back in the chair, lean slightly forward always, as this helps to hold the instrument securely. After following these instructions the guitar should balance on your lap by itself. (Fig. No. 1.)

THE PICK AND WRIST ACTION

Bring the right arm up until the elbow rests very lightly on the top edge of the body. The end of your hand should now be half way between the bridge and the end of the fingerboard. The inside of the wrist should be approximately two inches above the string level. Fold the fingers of the right hand under, but not so far as to have them touch the palm of the hand. For example, wrap the fingers of the right hand around a broom handle, bending the fingers from the first and second joint. After doing this remove the handle and notice the position of the fingers. The result should be the correct curve. (Fig. No. (2.)

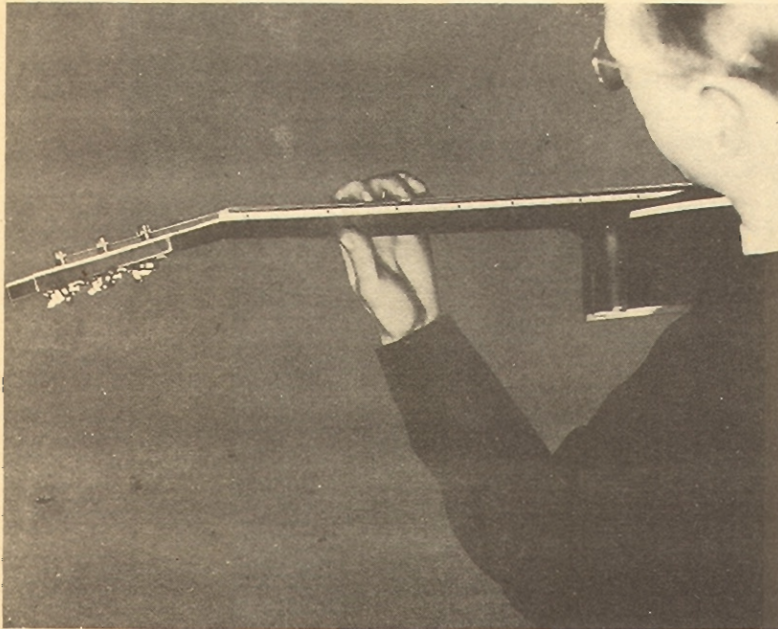
Now place the pick on the first joint of the first finger so that the horizontal axis is parallel to the back of your hand. Then place the end of your thumb (approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch) on the pick so that there is a half inch of the pointed end showing. Do not hold the pick too tightly as it must be allowed to oscillate rather than bend. In a complete wrist action the wrist imitates a twisting motion with each stroke, very much like flicking something off your hand. See that you use a quick and accurate stroke, eliminating all excess movement because you want the notes to sound simultaneously, not one by one. When playing on inside strings use the next highest string as a pick-stop. The axis of your wrist should be directly over the highest note as the top note should predominate. In other words if you are picking the B, D, and G strings as a triad, the axis should be over the B string with the result that the D string will sound softly, the G string a little louder, and the B string will be the loudest, which is dynamically correct.



THE LEFT HAND

In studying this book it is necessary to bear the following factors in mind as they will not be mentioned in the explanations of the exercises. The fundamentals do not change in the different exercises, but the situations do. There is only one correct way to place the fingers on the fingerboard. Drop your left hand down alongside your body entirely relaxed. Now bring it up slowly leaving the fingers curved (slowly twisting it counter-clockwise) until your thumb touches the neck halfway between the body and the nut. The thumb must ride approximately one-third of the way around the neck from the bass side. Never let your thumb extend above the fingerboard level, and never let it travel more than halfway around the curve of the neck. Your knuckles should be almost parallel to the side of the neck. Now place your fingers on the fingerboard in an arched position, not trying to finger anything, just letting them rest there. Slide your hand slowly up the neck toward the body. When your hand touches the body of the instrument your elbow should be next to your torso. Now slide along the neck slowly with your elbow traveling at just half the speed of your hand. This principle is similar to the hour and minute hand of a clock. If this is properly applied you will notice the position of the hand will change very little in relation to the neck. This is of great importance in the development of mechanical perfection.

The fingers must be arched until just the tips rest on the strings so that they work up and down hammer-fashion seating just back of the frets, not in between and not on top. Bend your left thumb back



slightly so that only the ball or fleshy part touches the neck. Do not hug the neck with the inner part of the hand. It is necessary to keep the fingers suspended over the fingerboard at all times. Do not let them stand up straight, curl under the fingerboard, or wander in any fashion. The correct place is approximately one-half inch above the strings for in this position they are always ready to operate. This greatly improves accuracy of the fingers. Here is a practical example of this principle. If you suspend an object

above a designated spot and dropped it, wouldn't your accuracy be far greater than if you stood a few feet away and threw the object at the spot? The wrist must be kept straight at all times except when executing a very long reach. Your hand is like a piece of machinery which can develop mechanical trouble if thrown into odd positions. Those little push-rods in the back of the hand that operate the fingers must have a straight course if expected to work properly. Besides being correct, the straight-wrist posture is more comfortable and natural when you get used to it. (Fig. No. 3.)

It is important to remember that the exercises in this book should be practiced very legato. In order to do so, the notes must be given their full value and must be connected with no pause between them. The changes from formation to formation must be executed in the least amount of time. Do not stint the value of the notes in order to give yourself time to make the next formation. In making these quick shifts, do not rush the tempo. Plant your fingers solidly and firmly on the fingerboard. After releasing the pressure on a formation get used to forming the next position while the hand is in motion. Do not wait until the hand arrives at the location before forming the fingers. This saves time and naturally goes hand in hand with the legato principle.

The reason legato is being stressed so much is because it is the hardest form of phrasing for the guitar. Stacatto, the reverse, is the natural form and therefore the easiest one. In practicing legato remember to re-apply the pressure for each formation. Do not slide around holding the pressure, yet do not go to the extreme by lifting the fingers too far off the strings during the change. Eliminate all waste motion with the fingers. The closer they are to the fingerboard, the less time it takes to place them. The mechanics of these exercises have been carefully planned and tested.



THE ATTACK AND EXIT

A clean smooth technique depends upon a good firm attack which is accomplished only when both hands work in perfect unison. To fret a note or chord before picking it produces a poor tone and limits the speed of the hand. In the correct attack the pressure is applied the instant the pick strikes the string. Always apply the pressure quickly with a deliberate snap, like a trigger releasing a strong spring. In the exit of a note or chord, the pressure must be released as quickly as it was applied because a slow release produces a bad buzzing sound, especially when working on the lower strings. The pressure release must be straight up off the fingerboard and not slanting in the direction of the next position, otherwise a slurring effect will be the result.

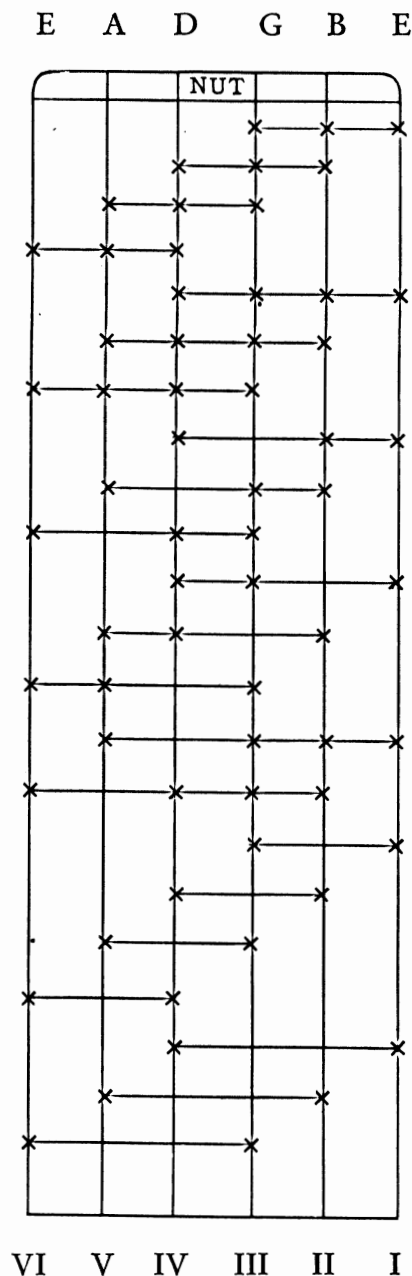
EXPLANATION OF THE STRING CHART

In this method the strings are listed in groups, or sets (see the chart), and for each set there is a symbol, either numerical, alphabetical, or both. This system has to be used because of the many different locations to play the same notations. For example, the C major triad with the first finger on the second fret of the B string, the open G string, and the second finger on the second fret of the D string, can be played in three different positions using the same voicing. In exercises where the second half is fingered in reverse of the first, markings will appear only in the first half. Set, pick, and finger markings remain good until changed. Some of the exercises have no markings, but are referred back to previous exercises for the fingerings.

FINGERBOARD CHART

Showing the different sets of strings and their symbols.

The x's designate the strings used in each set.



- 1st set of 3 (1|3)
- 2nd set of 3 (2|3)
- 3rd set of 3 (3|3)
- 4th set of 3 (4|3)
- 1st set of 4 (1|4)
- 2nd set of 4 (2|4)
- 3rd set of 4 (3|4)
- 1st set of broken 3 (1|B3)
- 2nd set of broken 3 (2|B3)
- 3rd set of broken 3 (3B|3)
- broken 1st set of 3 (B1|3)
- broken 2nd set of 3 (B2|3)
- broken 3rd set of 3 (B3|3)
- 1st set of broken 4 (1|B4)
- 2nd set of broken 4 (2|B4)
- 1st set of broken 2 (1|B2)
- 2nd set of broken 2 (2|B2)
- 3rd set of broken 2 (3|B2)
- 4th set of broken 2 (4|B2)
- (A|1)
- (A|2)
- (A|3)

WARNINGS

Remember to treat all the exercises, written and referred to, as separate studies. Do not skip over any of them because you will only have to come back to them later on, which is not the desired course. Another important point is the fact that learning and practicing a study are two different things. When learning an exercise you are teaching the fingers their respective locations. After that time you start practicing to perfect what you have learned, which is the real practice. You derive the most benefit from an exercise when you can practice it for ten or fifteen minutes without a break and with comparatively few errors. A mistake is a bad habit because it makes you conscious of that particular place wherever it may have occurred. It is natural to concentrate your efforts on that one place and by doing so, mistakes may be made in other places. To avoid this, practice an exercise very slowly for a long time. This gives you time to think of all the points thus establishing the foundation for a good, clean technique. This can only be had by practicing slowly and gradually increasing the tempo, at the same time never practicing an exercise faster than you can play it correctly.

To start with, your practice periods would be a half-hour in the morning and a half-hour in the afternoon. Increase to forty-five minutes after a month's time. Build your practice time up so that after three months you are practicing in three forty-five minute periods, and in five month's time, in three one-hour periods per day. Never practice more than an hour in one period, as the mind becomes dull after that time and is no longer receptive. Three hours a day of the right kind of practice is sufficient, though more time will not hurt, providing you follow the rules just mentioned. After a concentrated hour of practice your mind, as well as your fingers and hand, should be tired.

In order to obtain the best results, do not rush through this book. Take three exercises (forms) per week as regular lessons. Each week take three more, while still practicing the preceding exercises, etc. Keep building this way, never dropping an exercise, as you will need the technical as well as the musical knowledge contained in all these studies to have a ready technique.

WITH MAJOR CHORDS

See before EX. 48

EX. 1

The first exercise is a harmonized major scale in triads using six different fingerings. The first form is on the second and first sets of three strings. (See notations below the staff.) The second form of Ex. 1 is played entirely on the second set of three strings. The third form is played on the second and first sets of three strings but varies from the first form because the cross-over is on a different note of the scale. The fourth form is on the third, second and first sets of three strings. The notation in all the forms of the first exercise is the same but the fingerings are different in each one, and should be practiced as separate exercises. You will notice that the first four forms of Ex. 1 are long forms which cover quite a bit of the fingerboard. The fifth form is more condensed and the sixth form is the most condensed form of this harmonized scale. This first exercise is written in whole notes with no division of bars because the notes are of equal value and should be practiced very slowly. Ex. 1 and all its forms should be played in all the keys, made possible by the six different fingerings, as follows:

1st form—from C up to F

2nd form—from C up to C sharp (D if possible)

3rd form—from C up to F

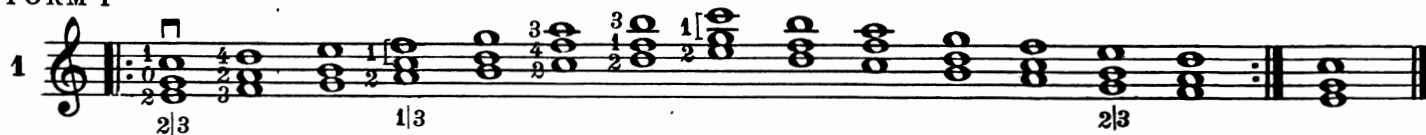
4th form—from A flat up to D flat (D if possible)

5th form—from A flat up to E

6th form—from F sharp up to C sharp

It is necessary to become familiar with all these forms as they will be referred to often.

FORM 1



FORM 2



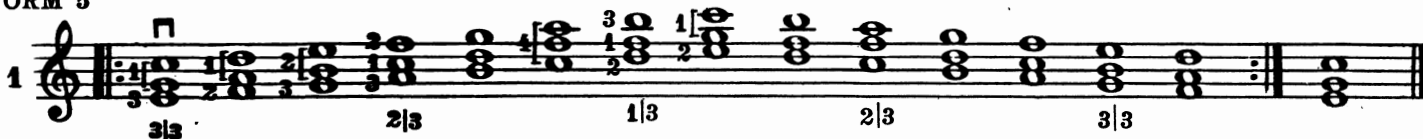
FORM 3



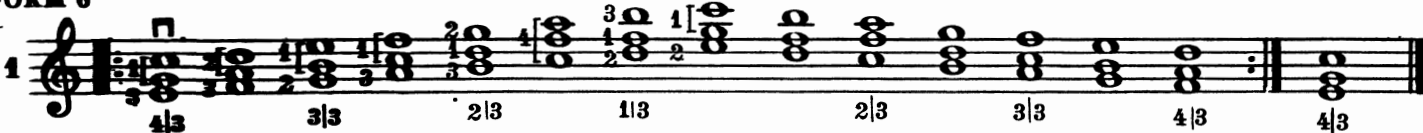
FORM 4



FORM 5



FORM 6



EX. 2

Ex. No. 2 is a preparatory exercise. This form of picking is termed arpeggio picking. To get acquainted with this form for the right hand, it is used on open strings so that you have to concentrate only on the pick and wrist action. It should be developed to sound even dynamically and steady rhythmically. To explain the pick and wrist action in Ex. 2 is difficult as we do not actually pick each string individually. The pick passes over each string and accents it with a slight kick, which is more of a pulsation. The reason for this is that using the pulsation principle you will be able to maintain a steady tempo and you will not strike two strings at once, as you might do if you were just forcibly pushing the pick across the strings. In other words it should have a smooth but deliberate effect. If and when you do strike two strings together, you will know that you're not "pulsating" properly, if at all. In the down strokes, use the next highest string as a pick stop. In the up strokes, you will not need a stop as the pick returns in in upward motion.



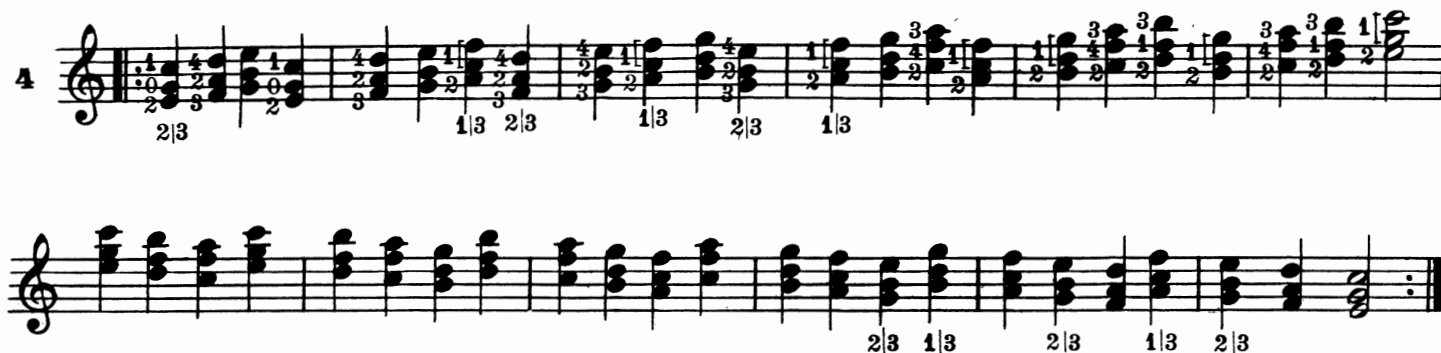
Ex. 3

This is the harmonized scale combined with the arpeggio picking and it should be practiced in six fingerings, the first of which is shown in the exercise. The other five are to be found in the forms of Ex. 1. Practice all six forms as separate exercises. You will notice that at the beginning of each measure you will find a triad in parenthesis combining the notes in that measure. This shows that it is a chord formation and is not a single string fingering. Practice this exercise in all its forms slowly. Also make sure that the notes are of equal value, as the tendency is to skip over the last note in each measure in order to get to the next position in time. Practice all these exercises as legato as possible, which will necessitate a quick accurate shift from one position to another.



EX. 4

In this exercise the major scale (harmonized in common triads) is shown in sequence form, three steps up and return on the first triad, then, on the second triad, etc., ascending; the reverse, descending. This is also to be practiced using the five other fingerings as found in Ex. 1, and in all the keys. Practice it very slowly and maintain an even tempo. Ex. 4 is to be practiced later on using the arpeggio picking.



EX. 5

Care must be taken in maintaining an even tempo, as every other measure is in arpeggio picking and the natural tendency is to hurry the whole notes. Count four beats for the first measure just as you would for the second measure. Also practice in all the fingerings found in the Ex. 1, and in all the keys.



EX. 6

This exercise is similar to Ex. 5, in the fact that it is arpeggio picking combined with the whole note triad. The same principles are to be applied.



EX. 7

This exercise develops judgement of distance with the left hand. Note that the gap between the first and the second triad is an octave which when played in the long form is a long jump. Care should be taken in making sure that the fingers light surely and firmly. In the condensed form you do not have the hazard of a long jump between first and second triads, but crossing over the sets of strings to jump the octave presents a different problem as this must be done cleanly. This is to be played in all six fingerings and in all the keys as found in Ex. 1. Later employ arpeggio picking.



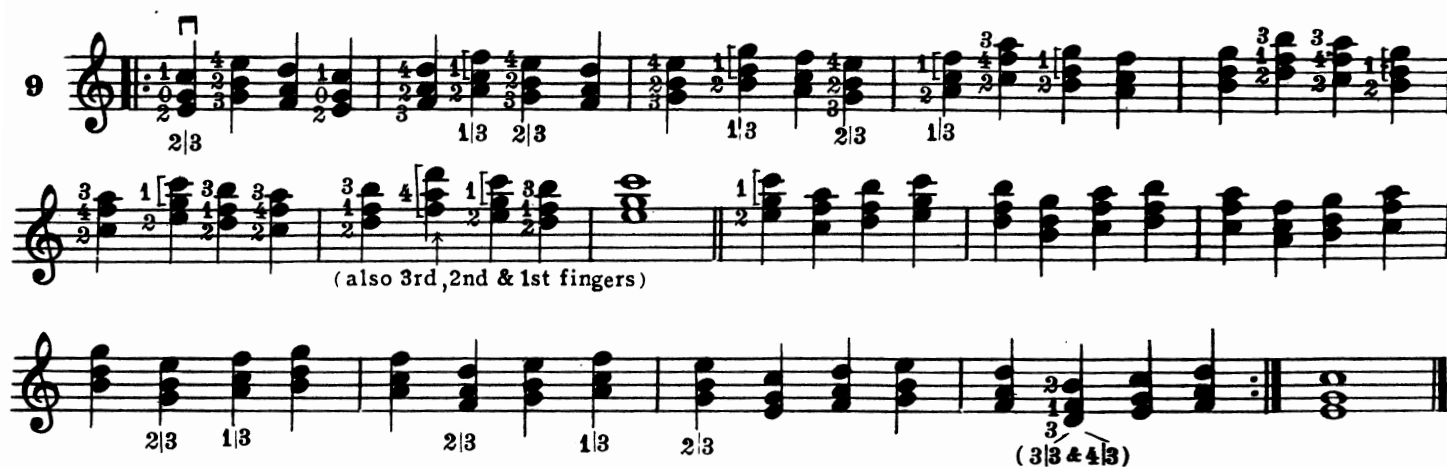
EX. 8

A rhythmic form of the scale. When practicing bear in mind all the previous explanations and warnings. Note that the scale goes through a rhythmic cycle, which is very fine practice as the "half-time" provides a breathing spell before the next burst of speed. To be practiced in all the different fingerings and keys.



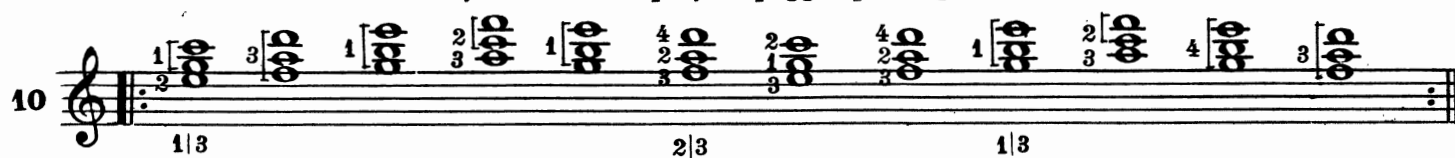
EX. 9

Another sequence form of the harmonized scale—the reverse of Ex. 4. In the seventh measure of this exercise, the second triad should be played not only with a Barre of the fourth finger as marked, but also with Barres of the third, second and first fingers alternately. In the last measure the second triad should be practiced using the third set of three strings and also the fourth set. Later employ arpeggio picking.



EX. 10

This exercise should be practiced carefully as it is very confusing because of the fingering changing within itself. Practice in all keys. Later employ arpeggio picking.



EX. 11 (Two forms)

To be practiced very slowly, paying strict attention to the markings. Later employ arpeggio picking.

FORM 1



FORM 2



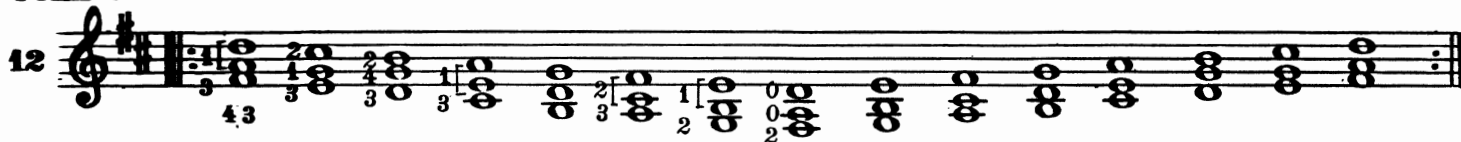
EX. 12 (Three forms)

This exercise is in two sharps because that is the lowest form of the harmonized scale on the guitar. After all the forms have been perfected join them up with the harmonized scale an octave higher and practice without a break. You will then be able to run two octaves in the harmonized scale. Later employ arpeggio picking.

FORM 1



FORM 2



FORM 3



EX. 13 (Two forms)

The first form was especially designed for strengthening the third and fourth fingers. The second form is difficult in the high register and therefore good practice.

FORM 1

FORM 2

EX. 14 (Three forms)

This exercise has a definite purpose and should be practiced very slowly and carefully. The upper (melodic) line is in half notes while the two lower voices are in whole notes. Make sure they sustain their full value. Practice all three forms equally as the purpose throughout this method is balanced technique.

FORM 1

FORM 2

FORM 3

EX. 15 (Two forms)

This is practically the same as Ex. 14, the difference being that in this exercise we modulate a half tone up and a half tone down at each two-bar phrase. Practice in all keys. Go from one key to another without a stop.

FORM 1

FORM 2

EX. 16 (Three forms)

This exercise must be practiced very carefully as we introduce a new principle in the first two forms which is the "breaking" (or flattening from an arched position) of the first joint of the fingers. In the first form at the second and third measures, you flatten the first joint of the second finger to produce the added note, which brings this principle into the classification of a fifth finger. It is a very difficult maneuver because the finger that is doing the flattening must sustain another note during the process. In the second form, in the first and last measures, the third finger does the flattening which is also very difficult. This flattening principle must be practiced methodically as it must be reliable rhythmically and should be done with a snap. Do not skip over this principle as it is very important. Practice very slowly. The third form does not employ this principle but should be practiced just as carefully.

FORM 1

16

FORM 2

16

FORM 3

16

EX. 17 (Two forms)

This is the modulating form of Ex. 16. The same principles should be applied, making sure that the point of modulation is clean and distinct. Do not slide the left hand in the modulation. It should be a fast, accurate change. The pressure should be released for just a fraction of a second during the change. Practice in all keys.

FORM 1

17

FORM 2

17

EX. 18 (Four forms)

This exercise, a combination of exercises 14 and 16, produces the major scale built on the tonic chord. The two lower voices must sustain for their full value. This exercise should be practiced in all keys, which is made possible by the different fingerings.

FORM 1

18

FORM 2

18

FORM 3

18

FORM 4

18

EX. 19

A major arpeggio study in triads which takes in all the consecutive sets of three strings. Practice as legato as possible, without slurring. Watch the markings carefully as the fingerings are constantly changing. To be played in all keys, and later employing arpeggio picking.

19

EX. 20

A variation of the major scale with the top voice in quarter notes and the bottom voices in whole notes. Be very careful in this exercise as the finger flattening principle will be doubly hard. There are no markings in this exercise because it should be practiced using the four different forms found in Ex. 18. Practice in all keys.

20

EX. 21

This is a lower form of the major scale built on the tonic chord. It should be practiced up to the key of C.

Key of F

21

EX. 22

A variation of Ex. 21. Apply the same principles.

22

EX. 23 (Three forms)

This major exercise was especially designed to strengthen the fourth finger. To be practiced in all keys.

FORM 1

23

FORM 2

23

FORM 3

23

EX. 24

A modulating form of Ex. 23, in which the same principles are to be applied. Practice using all the forms found in that exercise.

24

EX. 25

A variation of Ex. 24, to be practiced utilizing the fingering found in Ex. 23, just as you did in in Ex. 24 above.

25

WITH MINOR CHORDS

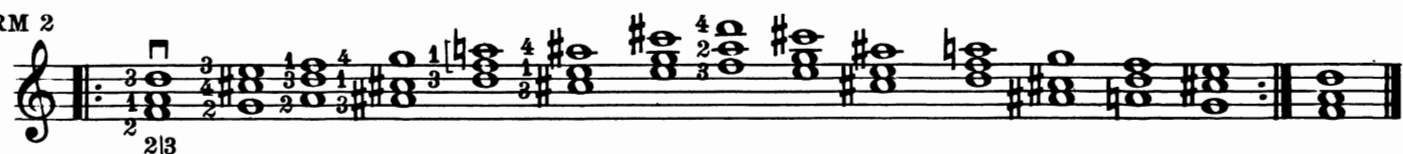
EX. 26

Starting a harmonized minor scale study in six different forms. Pay close attention to the markings in these forms as they are very confusing and difficult. Watch the movement of all the fingers closely. Give this exercise the same treatment as Ex. 1, such as arpeggio picking, etc. Practice in all keys.

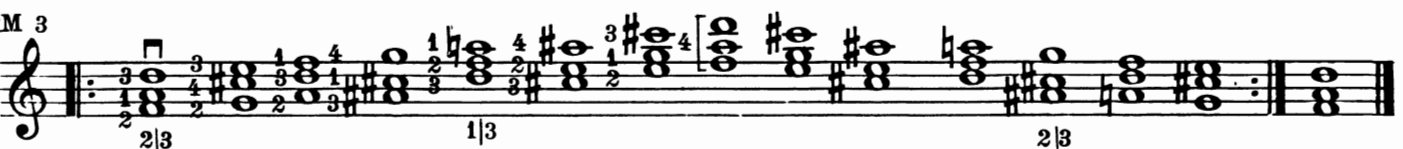
FORM 1

26 

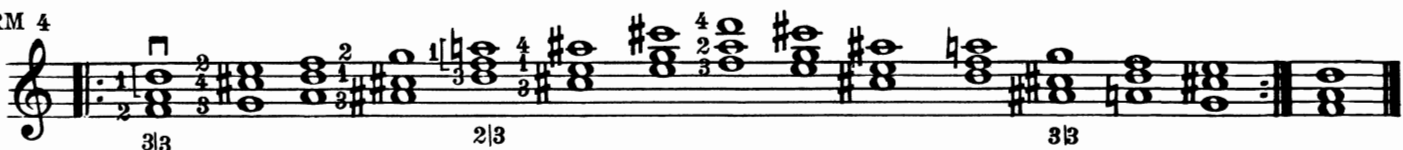
FORM 2

26 

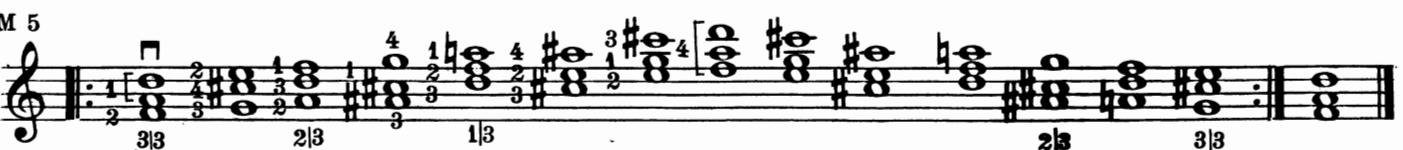
FORM 3

26 

FORM 4

26 

FORM 5

26 


FORM 6

26 

EX. 27 (Six forms)

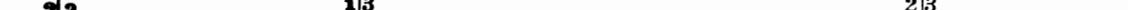
This is a different form of the harmonized minor scale and should be given the same treatment as Ex. 26. Always bear in mind the legato practice and the use of the six different fingerings. Practice in all keys.

FORM 1

27 


FORM 2

[illegible]**FORM 3**

27 

FORM 4

FORM 4


27 

FORM 5

27 

FORM 6

FORM 6

27 

EX. 28 (Three forms)

This is a lower form (in pitch) of the harmonized minor scale. Practice very carefully as some of the fingerings, though correct, are confusing. Practice this also with the arpeggio picking and in all keys.

FORM 1 (Melodic minor scale ascend. - harmonic descend.)

28

FORM 2

28

FORM 3

28

EX. 29 (Three forms)

Another low form of the harmonized minor scale. It should be given the same treatment as Ex. 28.

FORM 1

29

FORM 2

29

FORM 3

29

EX. 30 (Six forms)

A different harmonization of the minor scale which, like the other scale studies, is in six forms. To be given the same treatment as Ex. 1.

FORM 1

FORM 2

FORM 3

FORM 4

FORM 5

FORM 6

EX. 31 (Six forms)

The harmonized minor scale built on the tonic chord. To explain this more clearly in case of doubt, it is written in the key of D minor (using accidentals), using the tonic triad only, as harmony. Practice each form carefully as each fingering presents different hazards. This exercise is to be practiced in all keys.

FORM 1

31

FORM 2

31

FORM 3

31

FORM 4

31

FORM 5

31

FORM 6

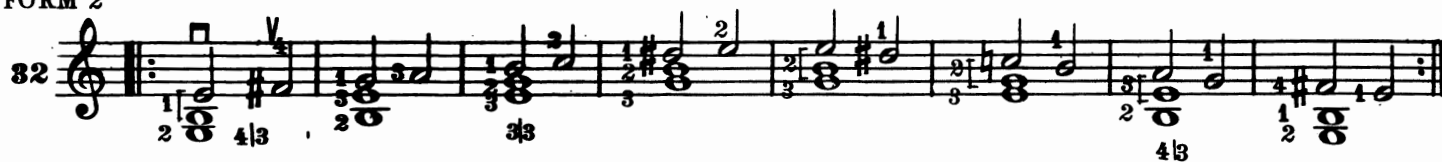
31

A lower form of the harmonized minor scale built on the tonic chord. Apply the same principles in this exercise as in the previous ones.

FORM 1



FORM 2



FORM 3



FORM 4



EXS. 33 & 34

Built on the seventh arpeggio which takes in the entire fingerboard. These exercises cannot be played in all the keys in their original form but can be moved up and down the fingerboard by leaving out the first measure when descending (if too low) and leaving out the fifth measure when ascending (if too high). Ex. 33 is in one form and Ex. 34 is in four forms. Practice the fingerings in Ex. 33 using the same notation as in Ex. 34.

33

FORM 1

34

FORM 2

34

FORM 3

34

FORM 4

34

EX. 35

A short seventh arpeggio in triads. You will notice that the fingerings in this exercise fall right under the hand. Pay special attention to the markings as this exercise uses alternate picking, which means that the second and fourth triads in the measure are played with up-strokes. Practice in all keys, descending chromatically.

35

EX. 36 (Three forms)

A long seventh arpeggio in triads. When the fingerings in all three forms are learned, start practicing them with alternate picking, as in Ex. 35. Also practice with arpeggio picking.

36

1/3 2/3 3/3

36

1/3 2/3 3/3

36

1/3 2/3 3/3

FORM 3

36

1/3 2/3 3/3

EX. 37 (Two forms)

This is the first of a series of stretching exercises. You will notice that the middle note remains the same while the other two voices move around the middle voice in chromatic tenths. This is the first exercise using a broken set of three strings. (See page 6). Pay close attention to the set markings under the staff in all these exercises. Practice in all keys in straight down strokes, then with arpeggio picking. Be careful in the latter as you have to jump over a string with the pick. This must be done smoothly.

FORM 1

37

1/3


FORM 2

37

2/3

Ex. 38 is in one form and Ex. 39 is in two forms. Give these exercises the same treatment as given Ex.

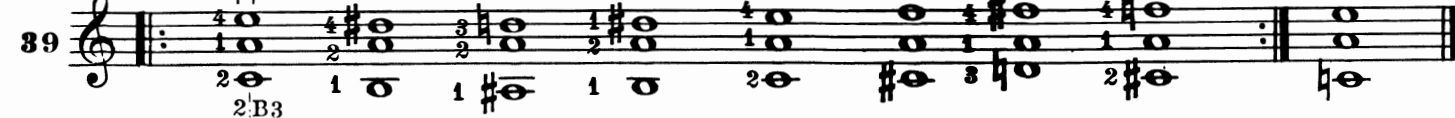
37 Practice in all keys.

38 

FORM 1

39 

FORM 2

39 

EX. 40 (Two forms)

Contrary motion is introduced in this stretching exercise. This comes more under the heading of hand gymnastics. Constant practice of these two forms will definitely increase the spread of the fingers, particularly in the first form. Though dissonant in spots, it is correct. Practice in all keys which is made possible by the two forms.

FORM 1

40 

FORM 2

40 

EX. 41 (Two forms)

This is related to Ex. 40 inasmuch as it is a stretching exercise with similar structure. The same principles are to be applied.

FORM 1

41 


FORM 2

41 


EX. 42 (Two forms)

Contrary motion is again employed in this exercise. Observe all markings carefully. Practice in all keys.

FORM 1

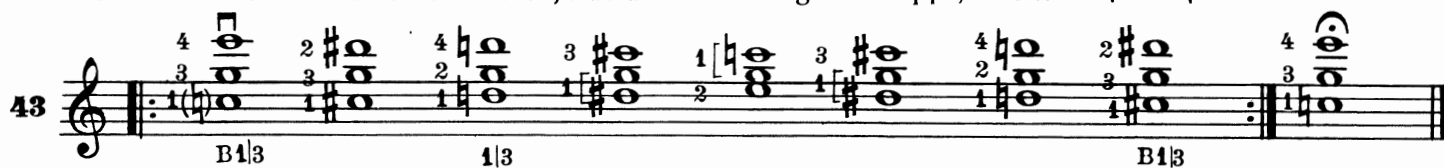
42 

FORM 2

42 

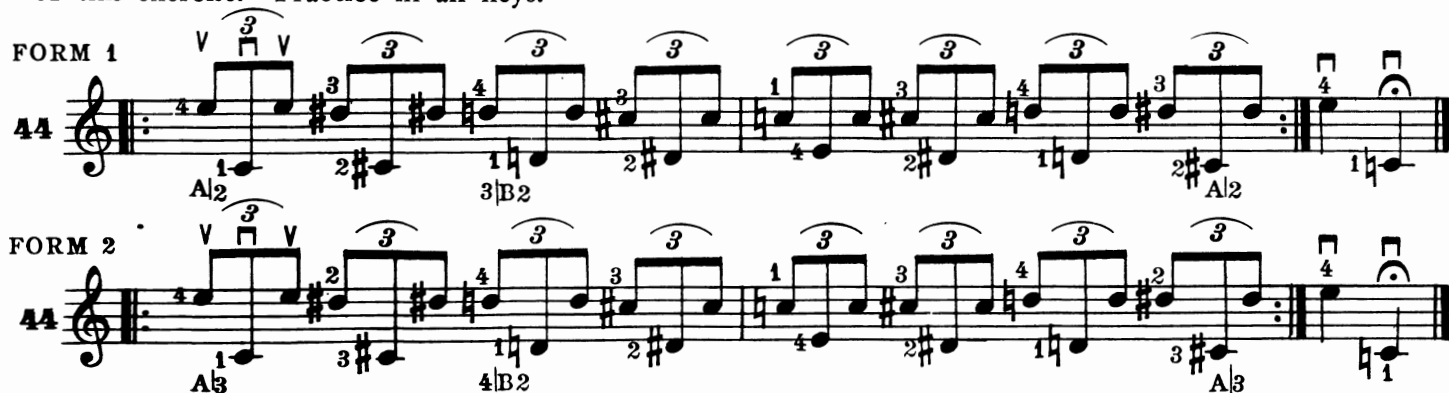
EX. 43

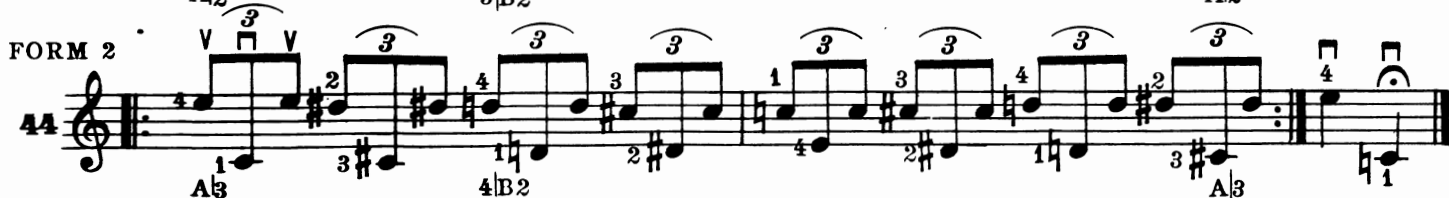
This is the same notation as Ex. 42, but an octave higher. Apply the same principles.

43 

EX. 44 (Two forms)

Introducing a new type of picking which is very hard to gauge, therefore it will develop accuracy with the pick. Although this exercise is written in 8th triplets, practice very slowly at first. Note the new set markings under the staff. They refer to the chart on page 6. Pay special attention to the mechanics of this exercise. Practice in all keys.

FORM 1
44 

FORM 2
44 

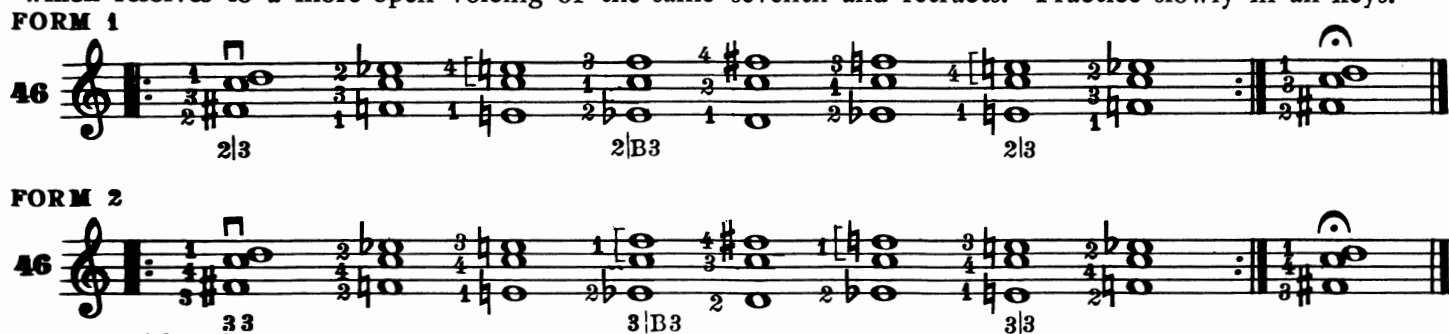
EX. 45


Same notation as in Ex. 44, but an octave higher. Practice in as many keys as possible.

45 

EX. 46 (Two forms)


Contrary motion is again employed. This exercise starts on the seventh triad, goes through a progression which resolves to a more open voicing of the same seventh and retracts. Practice slowly in all keys.

FORM 1
46 

FORM 2
46 

EX. 47 (Two forms)

The lower three notes of this exercise are identical with Ex. 46, but we have added a stationary note on top which makes it necessary for this to be practiced as a new and separate exercise. Observe all markings carefully and practice slowly in all keys.

FORM 1
47 

FORM 2
47 

WITH DIMINISHED CHORDS

EX. 48

Starting the diminished study of this volume. These first two exercises on the diminished triad are very important. As you know the diminished chord repeats itself every four frets. Therefore it is necessary to have a good foundation in order to judge the distance between triads. You will notice the fingering remains the same throughout this exercise. The jumps should be fast and accurate with the fingers solidly implanted each time. In other words, look out for slides. The first finger should rest just above the fourth string, not riding it, but suspended a little above the string. Practice slowly.



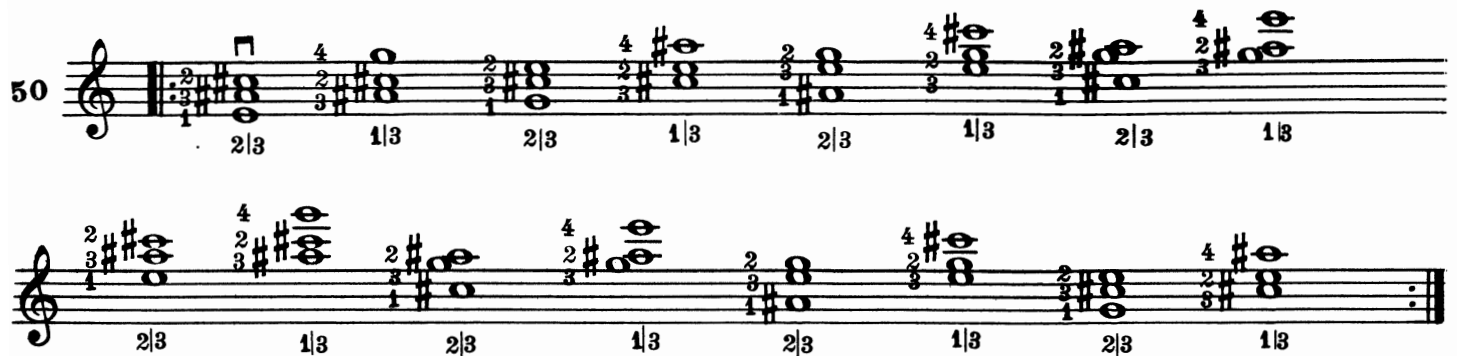
EX. 49

The same principles apply in this exercise as in Ex. 48 except for the finger suspension, which is reversed. This time the first, second and third fingers do the work, and the fourth finger is poised just above the first string. You may have to spend a lot of time on these first two diminished exercises to get the two idle fingers to lie in readiness. This is important and must be practiced until perfect.



EX. 50

You will notice in this exercise why the finger training in Exs. 48 and 49 is necessary. Those exercises are combined in this one, in a one for one order. The first and fourth fingers should alternate like the ends of a rocker arm. In other words the first finger should remain down until the fourth comes down, but make sure there are never four notes sounding not even for a fraction of a second. With this fingering the exercise can be played very legato. Down strokes should be used throughout until thoroughly acquainted with the exercise, after which time alternate picking should be used, with the up-strokes falling on the second and fourth triads. Observe all markings carefully and practice slowly.



EX. 51

Our previous diminished fingerings play an important part in this exercise, which is in cycles with seven triads in each cycle. Markings will be found in the first cycle only as the set and fingering markings are the same in the rest of the cycles. Practice with down-strokes until thoroughly acquainted with the exercise, then use alternate picking, as explained in Ex. 50. Practice slowly.

51

EX. 52

The cycles in this exercise are divided by a bar line. Note the similarity to Ex. 51. The first cycle goes up the scale, the second cycle is the reverse of the first a half tone higher, and the third cycle is the reverse of the second a half tone higher; the result being chromatic diminished arpeggios. Fingerings will be found in the first two cycles only, as the rest use the same as these. When thoroughly acquainted with this exercise, employ alternate picking. Practice also with arpeggio picking.

52

EX. 53

A rather unusual fingering is introduced in this exercise which will have to be practiced rationally as it is tiring at first. Make sure that all the fingers except the second are arched. Don't be alarmed if the first joint of the second finger aches slightly while it is learning to bear the strain. The fingering remains the same ascending until the octave is reached, then reverses and remains the same descending until the starting point is reached.



EX. 54

A variation and development of Ex. 53 in which you go up and down the scale chromatically. The explanation of the preceding exercise is to be applied.

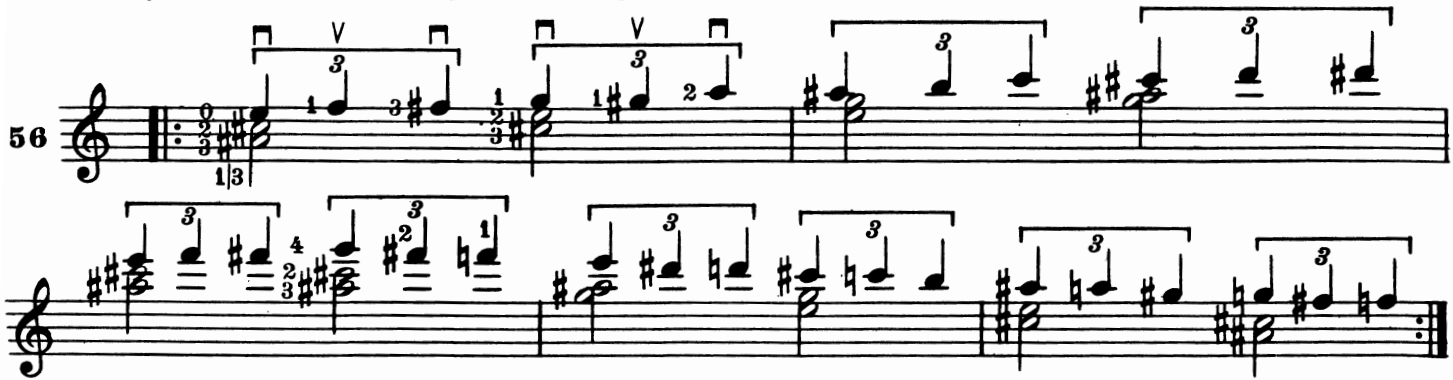


EX. 55

The diminished scale which ascends differently than it descends. Read the notes carefully as they may sound wrong at first. Don't depend on your "ear". You may have difficulty in forming the ascending formation. To avoid this, over-spread rather than under-spread your fingers. The descending fingering is less difficult. In the second form, the ascending fingering is difficult and the third finger may be sluggish, so practice this form very slowly to provide time for concentration on the movement of that finger.



The chromatic diminished scale in this form is one of the most difficult exercises so far, inasmuch as you have to play two notes in succession with the first finger. The difficulty here is in making these two notes sound as though they were fingered with two fingers instead of one. This can be done by making the movement very fast without sliding or slurring. Practice slowly.



EX. 57

In this exercise the top line is in quarter notes and the harmonic structure is in whole notes. Make sure the whole notes are held for their full value. Check once in a while to make sure all three notes in the triad are sounding. This exercise increases the reach of the fourth finger. This finger will have a tendency to lay flat when it should be arched. This may be a strain at first but it can be developed through work.



EX. 58 (Two forms)

This is the first diminished chord exercise in open voicing. It is necessary to *"deaden" a string. This is taken care of by the fingering. For instance, in the first form the D string (IV) is stopped from vibrating with the second finger while that finger is used for the note on the A (V) string. Practice slowly and observe all markings.

FORM 1

58

1|B4

FORM 2

58

2|B4

1|B4

2|B4

*i.e. The pick strikes that string, but the left hand finger does not let it sound clearly.

EX. 59

This exercise combines open voicing with closed voicing. Observe all markings and practice slowly.

Exercise 59 consists of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. It contains several measures of music with chords and individual notes, including fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and a 'V' marking. The second staff continues the exercise with similar notation, including a '1/B4' marking and various chord voicings.

EX. 60 (Two forms)

In this exercise the moving voice is in the middle of the structure, which presents a difficulty as the up-stroke must pick the middle note while the two outside notes are sounding. Make sure you do not deaden either of the sustaining voices with the up-stroke. This is accomplished as follows: After the down-stroke the pick should travel in a small returning arc around the upper string so you will not touch it and stop its vibration. Then with the descending backward motion the pick will strike the middle note safely. Use a complete wrist action.

FORM 1

Form 1 of Exercise 60 is a single staff of music in treble clef, key of F#, 4/4 time. It features a sequence of chords and notes with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and a 'V' marking. Specific markings include '2 3/B3' and '2/B3'.

FORM 2

Form 2 of Exercise 60 is a single staff of music in treble clef, key of F#, 4/4 time. It features a sequence of chords and notes with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and a 'V' marking. Specific markings include '2 3/B3', '2/B3', '1/B3', and '2/B3 3/B3'.

EX. 61

The general structure of this exercise is identical to Ex. 60. The difference lies in the moving voice and the fingering. Apply the same principles.

Exercise 61 is a single staff of music in treble clef, key of F#, 4/4 time. It features a sequence of chords and notes with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and a 'V' marking. A specific marking '3/B3' is present.

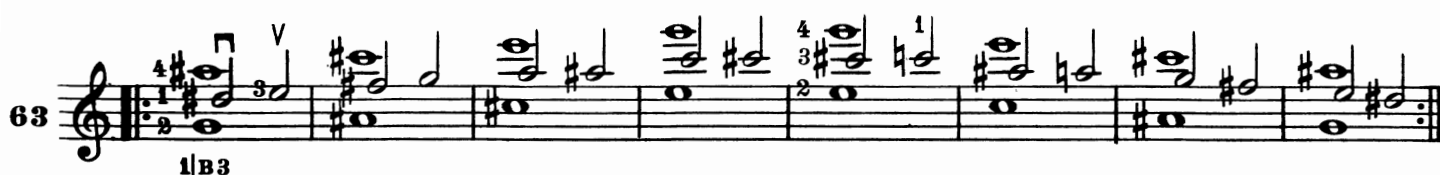
EX. 62

This is the same in every respect to Ex. 61 except that it is on the second "broken set of three" instead of the third set and therefore pitched higher. Apply the same principles.



EX. 63

This is the same as Ex. 62 except that it is on the first "broken set of three". The same principles to be applied.



EX. 64

The preceding three exercises are combined in this one, covering the entire finger-board. Practice very slowly and make sure the middle voice is clear and crisp. After this exercise is well practiced and you are thoroughly familiar with it, try changing the cross-over points.



EX. 65

The moving voice is again found in the middle of the structure, making this exercise similar to Ex. 64. By now you should be familiar with this type of picking.



EX. 66

A great amount of accuracy for the right hand is developed in this exercise through the type of picking employed. After you have sounded the first and second notes in the measure, the third and fourth fingers of the left hand should be right above the frets ready to drop into place. In other words, have the fingers formed before the two fingers drop and make sure they come down together firmly. Do not merely lay them down but snap them down hammer-fashion simultaneously with the pick stroke. Give the notes their full value and practice slowly.



EX. 67 (Two forms)

You should be familiar with the first half of each measure in this exercise, but **inasmuch as the second half in new**, practice the whole exercise as an entirely new study. Even when you are familiar with both groups it will still take considerable practice to combine them correctly.



EX. 68

This is practically the same as Ex. 67 and should be given the same treatment. You may have difficulty in sustaining the bass note while the other fingers are performing. This is overcome by concentration and a little more pressure on that one note. Practice slowly.

EX. 69

This exercise is in contrary motion, going from a closed to an open form of major chord, and then returning. It offers a great amount of variety in finger formation which develops accuracy and agility. Practice chromatically up and down the fingerboard.

EX. 70 (Two forms)

This study is beneficial in more ways than one as it develops accuracy, agility, and timing. In the last half of the second measure the middle triplet triad is sounded with an up-stroke. Make sure all three notes sound. In the first form, the first triplet in the last half of the second measure should be practiced using the first, second, third and fourth fingers alternately. The proper way to do this is to use the fourth finger the first time through, the third finger the second time, etc. Do not apply this in the second form because the fingering will not match. Practice slowly in all keys.

EX. 71 (Two forms)

The first form of this exercise was designed to develop the third and fourth fingers, and the second form for the fourth finger alone. Practice slowly at first in all keys. When speed is developed in these two forms, the top line becomes a moderate trill.

FORM 1

71

FORM 2

71

EX. 72

This is Ex. 71 inverted. It develops the third and fourth fingers for long range accuracy. Be very careful in placing the fourth finger each time as it may deaden the next string. The picking is very touchy in this exercise as you have to cross over the triad and sound the D string with an up-stroke. Practice chromatically up and down the fingerboard. Practice slowly.

72

EX. 73 (Three forms)

This exercise is built on half the scale and is, in general, good for developing the hand. You will notice that the under structure is in thirds. Make them clear and legato. The third form is particularly valuable for the hand as you play the exercise without the use of the first finger. Practice slowly in all keys.

FORM 1

73

FORM 2

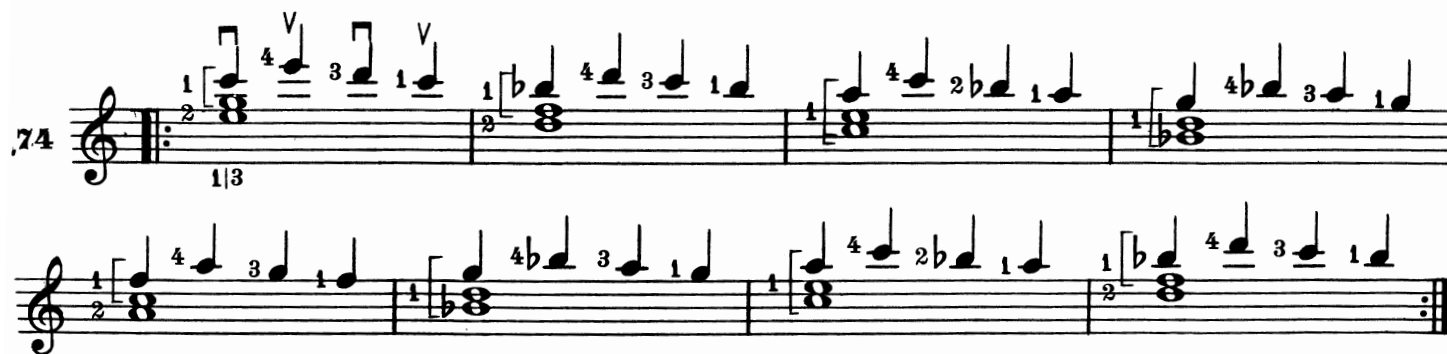
73

FORM 3

73

EX. 74

A variation of Ex. 73 for developing a long and accurate reach.



EX. 75 (Two forms)

This is identical with Ex. 71 but an octave lower. More pressure has to be applied when playing on the lower strings in order to obtain a clear tone. Practice carefully.



EX. 76 (Two forms)

Identical with Ex. 73, but an octave lower. Practice slowly in all keys.



EX. 77 (Four forms)

A variation of the last half of the major scale. Forms 3 and 4 are identical in notation but an octave lower than forms 1 and 2. Practice each form up and down the fingerboard as far as possible without using open strings. Practice slowly at first.

77

FORM 1

FORM 2

FORM 3

FORM 4

EX. 78

This is a variation of the major scale. Practice as legato as possible. Practice up to the key of F.

78

EX. 79

This is another variation of the major scale, played on the lower sets. After this is practiced, use the fingerings found in Ex. 76 with this notation, then use the notation in Ex. 76 with the fingerings in this exercise. Practice down to key of F.

79

EX. 80

The augmented chord with the whole tone scale as a melody. Form 1 is on one set while Form 2 takes in all "sets of three". You will notice in Form 2 that the patterns on the fingerboard are all related and closely located. Practice very legato making the cross-over quickly and accurately. Practice Form 2 chromatically up and down the fingerboard.

FORM 1

80

FORM 2

80

EX. 81

This exercise is very beneficial because of the wide variety of fingerings and hand gymnastics. Pay close attention to the fingerings and markings and do not try to practice it too fast. Benefit is derived from an exercise only when you can go through it without stopping, no matter how slowly you have to go in order to do so.

81

EX. 82

Individual control of the fingers is developed in this exercise. In the first measure the third and fourth fingers play the two upper voices in quarter notes while the first and second fingers sustain the lower voices in whole notes. Be careful that the pressure on the lower notes does not decrease because of this movement of the third and fourth fingers. In the second measure, the fourth finger sustains a triad while the first, second and third fingers play the lowest voice. Practice slowly so that the last chord in the second measure can be sounded in tempo; smoothly and evenly. Play in all possible keys chromatically up and down the fingerboard.

82

NOTE

Go back through the book now, taking all exercises in which down-strokes only were used and practice them using up-strokes. Then practice them using up and down strokes alternately. **WARNING:** In crossing the strings with the pick, make sure the up-strokes are played just as quickly as the down strokes. Try to make them sound alike.

ETUDE STUDY

The purpose of this short etude is to show the practical application of some of the fingerings and exercises in this method. After studying this etude you will readily see which exercises and fingerings have been combined in forming this etude.

You should try writing one of these every week, applying the following rules. Limit yourself to a certain number of exercises (five or six for example), varying the value of the notes any way you wish without changing the fingering. You can use any part of the exercises selected, from the smallest part to the whole exercise. Try to vary each etude from the rest. Remember you can not milk any of the exercises dry, as there is always a new way to twist them around. Keep them as simple as possible at first, for if they become too complicated it will be difficult to resolve them properly. Later on when your knowledge and experience has been built up gradually through the construction of the simpler forms, you will be able to resolve more difficult situations.

Solidity and construction should be the foremost thoughts. Keep them harmonious and melodic. Do not expect too much at first in developing these studies as it takes time and work to be able to write even a fairly good one each week. After constructing an etude write it out and save each one, so you will be able to check on your progress. One of the best features of this study is the fact that you can see your composition on paper, thereby enabling you to study it thoroughly. This study brings out and develops your individuality, at the same time teaching you to write along practical lines for the guitar.

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The lyrics are written below the bass staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

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